

APPENDIX A

INTRA-SERVICE SECTION 7 CONSULTATION

INTRA-SERVICE SECTION 7 EVALUATION FORM

Originating Person: Linda Malz
Telephone Number: 952-858-0716
Date: April 1, 2003

I. Region: 3

II Service Activity: Refuges and Wildlife

III. A. Listed species and/or their critical habitat.

Bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*).

B. Proposed species and/or proposed critical habitat. NOT APPLICABLE

C. Category 1 candidate species. NOT APPLICABLE

D. Include species/habitat occurrence on a map. See attached maps with locations of all known active and inactive bald eagle nests in 2002 which are in close proximity to the Proposed Action. All flood plain forest and wetland habitat could potentially be used by feeding or roosting bald eagles.

IV Location

Geographic area or station name and action: Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge, Bloomington, Minnesota. This consultation is in support of the Proposed Action identified in the Environmental Assessment (EA) for facility development (Proposed Maintenance Operations Complex and Residence).

Section, township and range: all or portions of:

Development Units

Legal Description

		Sec.	Twp.	Range
Maintenance Shop	NE1/4,NW1/4	6	114N	23W
	W1/2,NW1/4,NE1/4	6	114N	23W
Refuge Residence	W1/2,NE1/4,SE1/4	36	115N	24W

County and State: Carver, Minnesota

V Description of proposed action:

This proposal entails adopting the Proposed Action as outlined within the EA (Proposed Maintenance Operations Complex and Residence) prepared for facility development for Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. The proposed action includes development of a new maintenance shop/complex and a Refuge residence. A new 3,200 square foot maintenance shop would allow the Refuge to replace the existing inadequate facility located at Rapids Lake. The existing Rapids Lake maintenance facility (located within NW1/4, NE1/4, Section 6, T114N, R23W) and all remaining abandoned structures which were originally part of the Mittelsted farm would be removed after completion of the new shop. The two large machine sheds and hazardous materials storage building from the existing maintenance site would be relocated to the new complex site. A three bedroom single-story Refuge residence, preferably occupied by a Refuge employee with law enforcement authority, would ensure the safety and protection of facilities and equipment located at Rapids Lake. The proposed facility development strives to promote strong and balanced Refuge operations at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge. Following the completion of this consultation and based on the evaluation of public comments on the EA, the Regional Director (Region 3) of the Fish and Wildlife Service may make a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) determination and adopt the Proposed Action. The Regional Director may also select one of the other alternatives as presented in the EA or select an entirely new alternative that was not developed for the EA. Should an alternative other than the Proposed Action be selected, a new consultation would be required.

VI Determination of Effects:

A. Explanation of impacts of action on listed species/critical habitat

Bald Eagle at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge has monitored nesting bald eagles on the Refuge since 1995. The annual number of active eagle nests on the Refuge has varied between one and three. Production has usually been one eaglet per nest and occasionally a second eaglet has fledged. One of the three active nests that were used on the Refuge during the 2002 nesting season is identified on the attached maps. Two inactive nests which are also in close proximity to the Proposed Action, have been identified on these maps as well. These nest sites are located in the flood plain in live cottonwood trees located less than one half mile from the Minnesota River.

Bald eagles also use a variety of flood plain forest, wetland and riparian areas on the Refuge for feeding and migratory habitat. Migratory use of the Refuge is mainly in the spring around the time of ice-out. Migration generally occurs between late February and mid-April, with most of the activity concentrated around Refuge flood plain wetlands. During the summer and fall, Refuge staff occasionally see immature and adult bald eagles on Refuge flood plain wetlands.

Impacts of the Proposed Action on Bald Eagles at Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge

Based upon the 2000/2001 habitat mapping effort, there are 10,748 acres of flood plain wetland and forest habitat on the Refuge. It is anticipated that implementation of the Proposed Action would not negatively impact the relative abundance of forest or wetland habitat, the two most commonly used habitats by bald eagles on the Refuge. There may be some temporary disturbance to roosting or feeding eagles on the Refuge as a result of facility development activities. Given the limited acreage proposed for development, other quality habitats would be available for the eagles.

Implementation of the Proposed Action is not likely to adversely affect bald eagle nest sites on the Refuge. The known nest locations are not located within any proposed development units. Given the mature forest habitat that bald eagles have used for nesting on the Refuge, facility development is not expected to affect bald eagle nesting activity. The proposed development areas are currently or have previously been occupied by human presence (formerly known as the Lutz and Mittelsted farms) and lack mature forest habitat. Refuge staff would take into account nest locations when developing facilities and every effort would be made to minimize potential impacts on bald eagles.

Determination

Response Requested

No effect on species/critical habitat

X Not likely to adversely affect species/critical habitat

X concurrence

Likely to adversely affect species/critical habitat

Likely to jeopardize candidate or proposed species/critical habitat

Richard J. Schaff
Project Leader Signature

4/3/03
Date

VII Field Office Evaluation

A. Concur X

Do not concur _____

Tom P. Jinnell
Field Supervisor

4/14/03
Date